

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
DISTRICT OF MASSACHUSETTS

ARISE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE;)	
¿OISTE?; NEW ENGLAND STATE-AREA)	
CONFERENCE OF THE NAACP;)	
REV. TALBERT W. SWAN, II;)	
NORMAN W. OLIVER; DARLENE)	
ANDERSON; GUMERSINDO GOMEZ;)	
FRANK BUNTIN; RAFAEL RODRIQUEZ;)	
and DIANA NURSE)	Civil Action No. 05-30080-
MAP)	
Plaintiffs,)	
)	
v.)	
)	
)	
CITY OF SPRINGFIELD and SPRINGFIELD)	
ELECTION COMMISSION)	
)	
Defendants.)	

**DEFENDANTS' AFFIDAVIT OF DIRECT TESTIMONY
KATHLEEN LINGENBERG, DIRECTOR OF HOUSING AND
NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES, CITY OF SPRINGFIELD**

1) My name is Kathleen Lingenberg and I am the Director of Housing and Neighborhood Services. I have held this position since 1996. Prior to that time I worked for the Valley Opportunity Council, the Community Action Agency, serving Holyoke and Chicopee, where my duties were to develop affordable housing, oversee housing and homeless services and manage the agency's real estate portfolio. I received my undergraduate degree from University of Massachusetts and my graduate degree from American International College.

2) As Director I have the responsibility for policy development and promotion of housing activities within the City of Springfield, including conservation and expansion of the City's housing stock, development of housing planning, housing programs, coordinating the use of loans, grants, revolving fund mechanisms, the supervision of technical assistance for use in housing development, and program design, marketing programs, fulfillment of program goals and supervision of personnel for the Office of Housing and Neighborhood Services and the Division of Inspectional Services. The Director of Housing and Neighborhood Services oversees operations of the Office of

Housing and Neighborhood Services and Inspectional Services Division. I report directly to the Mayor who reviews work through reports and conferences.

3) As the Director of Housing and Neighborhood Services, I direct all elements of departmental housing programs. I advise and consult with governmental officials, commercial and residential property owners, developers and other housing related agencies on matters pertaining to housing. I assist in preparation of grant proposals and research grant sources for the development of housing in the City. I further conduct research, prepare reports, and initiate studies to provide information to aid in the solution of housing problems in the City. As the Director of Housing and Neighborhood Services I provide direct supervision and program design, oversight of marketing programs, ensure that program goals are met, and confer and communicate with area business and government officials

4) Specifically, I meet with prospective housing developers to assist in establishing the feasibility of new construction or substantial rehabilitation, address citizen groups concerning the ongoing municipal housing activities, and provide representation at conferences and meetings dealing with federal, state, and municipal housing policies. As the Director of Housing and Neighborhood Services, I assist and direct in the creation of homeownership opportunities for eligible persons, historic preservation and rehabilitation, and the stimulation of physical improvements to privately owned building in commercial and residential areas.

Neighborhoods, Neighborhood Councils, and Code Enforcement

5) For the purposes of the delivery of Code Enforcement/Inspectional Services, the 17 neighborhoods in the City of Springfield are divided into zones to facilitate the provision of services and investigation of complaints. Zone boundary adhere to neighborhood boundaries

- a) Zone A is comprised of Brightwood, Liberty Heights, and Memorial Square
- b) Zone B is comprised of Boston Road, East Springfield, Indian Orchard, and Pine Point
- c) Zone C is comprised of Bay, McKnight, Old Hill, and Upper Hill
- d) Zone D is comprised of Metro Center and the South End
- e) Zone E is comprised of Forest Park and Six Corners
- f) Zone F is comprised of East Forest Park and Sixteen Acres.

6) The following chart provides the racial demographics of the City's 17 neighborhoods as reported by the 1990 and 2000 Census:

Hispanic Pop (regardless of race)			non-Hispanic Black Pop		Total PoP
Neighborhood	1990 Census	2000 Census	1990 Census	2000 Census	2000 Census

<i>Bay</i>	18.0	28.2	67.3	60.3	4,256
<i>Boston Road</i>	04.8	15.7	12.8	17.0	3,670
<i>Brightwood</i>	78.2	85.2	10.3	06.2	3,936
<i>East Forest Park</i>	01.5	05.2	02.4	05.8	10,618
<i>East Springfield</i>	05.2	20.6	03.5	07.3	6,317
<i>Forest Park</i>	08.2	22.0	05.2	13.4	24,733
<i>Indian Orchard</i>	09.8	20.4	07.5	10.0	9,095
<i>Liberty Heights</i>	16.0	37.8	04.8	08.6	17,789
<i>McKnight</i>	18.3	26.7	57.8	52.6	4,881
<i>Memorial Square</i>	81.3	84.7	03.9	06.0	4,889
<i>Metro Center</i>	30.2	44.8	19.3	20.7	6,038
<i>Old Hill</i>	25.3	37.4	62.2	53.8	4,557
<i>Pine Point</i>	08.8	19.1	28.6	31.8	0,286
<i>Six Corners</i>	34.1	47.6	31.2	24.5	7,688
<i>Sixteen Acres</i>	03.5	08.3	12.3	15.1	22,937
<i>South End</i>	34.1	62.2	18.0	11.1	3,223
<i>Upper Hill</i>	09.2	13.1	59.2	53.4	7,179

Statistical Profile: Springfield and its Neighborhoods, prepared by the Springfield Planning Department, March 2003 (Statistical Profile 2000). The neighborhoods are becoming more racially and ethnically integrated.

7) There are 26 commonly recognized neighborhood organizations: Armoury Quadrangle Civic Association, Atwater Park Civic Association, Bay Area Neighborhood Council, Boston Road Civic Association, East Forest Park Civic Association, East Springfield Neighborhood Council, Concerned Citizens for Springfield Forest Park Civic Association, Hungry Hill Neighborhood Council, Indian Orchard Citizen Council, Indian Orchard Main Street Partnership, LeBroad Civic Association, Lower Liberty Heights Community Action Team, Maple-High/Six Corners Neighborhood Council, Mason Square Community Coalition, Mattoon Association, McKnight Neighborhood Council, New North Citizens Council, Old Hill Neighborhood Council, Outer Belt Civic Association, Pine Point Community Council, Sixteen Acres Civic Association, South End Citizens Council, The "X" Main Street Corporation, Upper Hill Residents Council, and Vietnamese/American Civic Association.

8) The Office of Housing and Neighborhood Services has the responsibility of overseeing the activities of the 13 federally funded neighborhood councils and associations. The following neighborhood organizations are provided operating funds from the federal Community Development Block Grant ("CDBG") program: Bay Area Neighborhood Council will receive in 2007 an estimated contract amount of \$9,200; Hungry Hill Neighborhood Council will receive in 2007 an estimated contract amount of \$5,000; Indian Orchard Citizens Council will receive in 2007 an estimated contract amount of \$5,000; Maple-High/Six Corners Neighborhood Council will receive in 2007 an estimated contract amount of \$8,500; McKnight Neighborhood Council will receive in 2007 an estimated contract amount of \$13,500; New North Neighborhood Council will receive in 2007 an estimated contract amount of \$8,500; Old Hill Neighborhood Council will receive in 2007 an estimated contract amount of \$13,500; Pine Point Neighborhood Council will receive in 2007 an estimated contract amount of \$5,000; South End Citizens Council will receive in 2007 an estimated contract amount of \$8,500; Upper Hill Residents Council will receive in 2007 an estimated contract amount of \$12,243.04; Concerned Citizens for Springfield (Lower Forest Park) will receive in 2007 an estimated contract amount of \$8,500; Lower Liberty Heights/YMCA of Greater Springfield will receive in 2007 an estimated contract amount of \$5,000; and the Armoury Quadrangle Civic Association will receive in 2007 an estimated contract amount of \$8,500. Eligibility for CBDG funds is based upon criteria established by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development ("HUD") and is based upon formulas which include poverty statistics. The funding amounts are a function of the cost to operate plus the activities the group intends to undertake.

9) As among the nine councils that represent specific neighborhoods, eight councils represent neighborhoods that are comprised of a majority of minority persons (according to the 2000 Census) . The one council (Indian Orchard Citizens Council) that does not represent a neighborhood that is not comprised of a majority of minority persons is a HUD-eligible area.

10) Neighborhood councils are organizations/legal entities that are separate from the City and that maintain their own by-laws. Officers of neighborhood councils are elected by the residents of the neighborhood in elections conducted by the neighborhood council. Where the source of funding is CBDG, monthly reporting requirement attend the payment of the money as with any other CBDG funded organizations. These reports provide information as to the organizations' progress in meetings its' goals and undertaking the activities that are provided in its contracted workplan. There are main areas into which contracted activities fall in a workplan: building organizational capacity, increasing citizen participation, and undertaking a revitalization project

11) Only three of the neighborhood councils have chosen to have offices in public spaces: New North, Old Hill, and Indian Orchard. The City has provided a staff person, whose salary is CBDG funded to the South End and the Indian Orchard Neighborhood Councils.

12) I recommend to all developers (business and housing) that they contact the relevant neighborhood council in which the project is located. Accordingly developers routinely contact the relevant neighborhood council, request to be placed on the neighborhood council's agenda, and attempt to get project approval from the relevant neighborhood council before approaching the City Council. Neighborhood council officers and members communicate with members of the City Council and solicit their assistance in obtaining the appropriate action, e.g., a zoning change, to facilitate or frustrate the efforts or plans of the developer. To that end, officers and members of the various neighborhood councils attend meetings of the City Council and often members of the City Council are invited to attend meetings of the neighborhood council.

Federal Entitlement Community Consolidated Plan

13) The City of Springfield is a federal Entitlement Community and receives annual allocations from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development. These funds are intended to benefit low and moderate income residents and improve areas of low and moderate concentration. The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development requires that the City to develop a Consolidated Plan, which identified community needs, establishes priorities, defines strategies and guides resource allocations. The current Consolidated Plan covers the period from July 1, 2005 to June 20, 2010. The Consolidated Plan is developed with extensive public input from many public hearings and by means of ongoing consultation with residents, agencies, community-based organizations, and private businesses.

14) The following constitutes the source of the funding from which the Office of Community Development and Office of Housing and Neighborhood Services provides benefits to low-income households: Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Home Investment Partnership (HOME), Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) and Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA).

15) Three main initiatives have been identified in the Consolidated Plan and guide the allocation of funding, priorities, and programming of the Office of Community Development and the Office of Housing and Neighborhood Services: human capital, neighborhoods, and economic development.

16) The Offices of Community Development and Housing and Neighborhood Services are committed to investing in residents of all income levels to enable them to lead healthy, productive lives; to offering support to households; and to building capacity of community-based organizations to better support vulnerable populations. The Offices of Community Development and Housing and Neighborhood Services are committed to enhancing the quality of life in Springfield's neighborhoods, including public places, infrastructures, and housing stock and ensuring that neighborhoods are good places to live, work, and recreate. The Offices of Community Development and Housing and Neighborhood Services are committed to expanding economic opportunities, particularly employment opportunities, for low and moderate income residents through efforts to attract, retain, and expand small businesses in neighborhood business districts and larger commercial and industrial establishments throughout the City.

17) The three areas of priority identified in the Consolidated Plan for the City of Springfield with regard to the goal of supporting, enhancing, and developing the “human capital” in the City of Springfield are i) youth services; ii) senior services; and iii) disabled persons. Primary among of these priorities is the need to improve the educational and health outcomes of youth who are living in the proposed Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area (NRSA). CDBG and other funds are being directed to additional programs, including those that serve homeless persons, single parent families seeking affordable childcare, and programs for individuals with insufficient or no health insurance coverage. This funding is also being used to improve the efficacy of the outreach conducted and programs implemented by neighborhood groups for low and moderate income persons.

18) The following are among the programs that being funded to further the City’s commitment to investing in the human capital of its citizens: academic athletic recreation program, WEB Dubois Academy, Fuel Assistance Program, Emergency Shelter Operations, Youth Development Program, Mass Fair Housing Center, Meals Program, After School Recreation Program; Warming Place Shelter, GED Education, Latino Employment Assistance Program (LEP), Job Training and Employment program, Summer Youth Development, Children of Incarcerated Parents, Vietnamese Community Enhancement, SafeSummer Street, and Youthbuild.

19) Among the programs that the City is implementing for the 2006-2007 performance year to further the goal of making Springfield neighborhoods a good place to live, work, and recreate, include a substantial investment in public facilities and infrastructure, a significant proactive code enforcement initiative, and a program targeted at the redevelopment of abandoned buildings and vacant lots. In furtherance of the goal of neighborhood enhancement, the City is contributing to the cost of rebuilding parks and recreation areas, the reconstruction of crumbling roads and sidewalks, and the clearance and demolition of dilapidated and blighted structures in low and moderate income neighborhoods. Funds utilized to support programs and projects in this category will also be directed to additional programs and projects, including housing rehabilitation programs, code enforcement activities and homeownership and lead paint removal assistance programs.

20) Because Springfield continues to be defined as a “high risk” community for lead poisoning due to the fact that 89.9 percent of the housing units were built prior to 1979, Springfield has undertaken actions and programs to evaluate and reduce the number of housing units containing lead-based hazards and to increase the inventory of lead-safe housing available to low and moderate income families, including (i) evaluation of lead hazards at each housing code inspection where children under six years of age reside; (ii) legal prosecution of property owners who fail to comply with orders to remedy lead hazards; and (iii) reapplying for funding from HUD’s Office for Healthy Homes and Lead Hazard Control to better pursue these goals.

21) The Office of Housing and Neighborhoods Division of Code Inspectional Services strives to provide fair unbiased code enforcement designed to improve the quality of housing stock in each of the City's 17 neighborhoods. All reasonable complaints are investigated by Code Inspectional Services staff and published on the Springfield Housing Code Enforcement website. Property owners are notified of code violations and provided an appropriate time to remedy the violation; where property owners fail to take needed remedial action, the City commences judicial proceedings to compel compliance with the City's codes. Where Code Enforcement staff are aware or informed of small children residing on the premises subject to any complaint, staff will conduct an additional lead-based paint determination and proceed as appropriate.

22) Among the activities and projects in which the City is currently engaged to enhance and improve the neighborhoods are the following: neighborhood capital improvement projects, parks and open spaces, neighborhood facilities, vacant lot cleanup, relocation assistance, and home program delivery, which includes, rehabilitation, direct homeowner assistance neighborhood facility, and public facility and development.

23) The Offices of Community Development and Housing and Neighborhood Services and the City of Springfield is committed to expanding economic opportunities and the City's technical assistance programming and its work to revitalize key commercial districts in the NRSA and other CDBG target areas. Current programming is being developed to eliminate the blight by attracting private investment and building a strong business community within each target district through the development of the basic business skills of existing micro-enterprises and persons seeking to start micro-enterprises and the identification of "gaps" that may be filled through attraction of new establishments. Funding allocated for economic development will be directed to commercial district revitalization through targeted, data driven programming that will both achieve improvements to blighting influences in neighborhood commercial districts and increase the availability of businesses and services in neighborhood commercial districts, including supermarkets, dry-cleaners, full service banks, non-fast food restaurants, and other establishments such as local and other niche establishments that serve or seek to increase their services to the residents of target districts.

24) More specifically, in order to further that goal of economic development, the City's primary focus is on revitalization of key commercial districts in CDBG target areas: the North End Main Street Corridor, the State Street Corridor, Walnut Street Corridor, and Indian Orchard Main Street Corridor. The demographic data of these neighborhoods shows that the neighborhoods that surround these four corridors contain high concentrations of low and moderate income persons, minorities, female-headed households and persons with disabilities. Multiple incidences of blighting influences and lack of building permit activity for renovation expansion and/or new construction along each of these corridors also indicate a need for commercial revitalization. Existing commercial district revitalization initiatives are already under way in each of the above identified areas (the North End Main Street Corridor, the State Street Corridor, Walnut Street Corridor, and Indian Orchard Main Street Corridor). Stakeholders along the North End Main Street Corridor, including representatives from the City, are working with

Massachusetts Institute of Technology to develop a commercial district revitalization plan. U.S. Rep. Richard Neal has been shepherding a major road and sidewalk reconstruction project that includes a commercial revitalization component along State Street and Walnut Street corridors. In Indian Orchard, a master plan – developed with input from the City and all major neighborhood stakeholders -- that includes the revitalization of the Indian Orchard Main Street Corridor, is in the early stages of implementation. Indian Orchard's strong art community is the foundation for the development of an arts development strategy.

25) The City has allocated funds to maximize the benefits to residents within the targeted areas in which low and moderate-income persons reside. Public infrastructure, parks, and public facilities improvements projects are being undertaken and planned for target neighborhoods. At least 70 percent of the CDBG funds are being directed to low and moderate income persons in CDBG target areas throughout the City. HOME funds are being used to directly assist low income households to achieve home ownership in any neighborhood (of the family's choosing) throughout the City. It has been the City's decision not to restrict – as have other cities in the State and country—the neighborhoods into which low income family may move with the benefit of HOME funds.

26) On the other hand, developer projects designed to improve housing stock predominately occur within the targeted low-income areas of the City. The Offices of Community Development and Housing and Neighborhood Services and the City have long recognized that there is an overwhelming housing burden among the majority of non-elderly, low-income renter householders. In response, the City is committed to dedicating significant resources to the development of additional affordable rental units and has adopted a Balanced Housing Strategy to guide development and meet neighborhood needs in a manner that affirmatively furthers fair housing. The Offices of Community Development and Housing and Neighborhood Services and the City have prioritized the investment in existing housing stock to provide quality affordable housing stock. In order to maintain affordable rental housing, the City continues to dedicate and seek funds to apply towards rehabilitation and lead abatement.

27) In response to the need for affordable family rental units, Offices of Community Development and Housing and Neighborhood Services have further prioritized appropriate redevelopment of family units by financially assisting projects that create or preserve family units. By this means, the City can meet its goal of increasing the number of deed restricted affordable housing units. The Offices of Community Development and Housing and Neighborhood Services are also seeking to increase the number of “new” units through the redevelopment of abandoned properties. The number of housing permits for single-family homes has increased steadily over the past five years. Many of these permits are for the development of affordable housing.

28) The Office of Housing and Neighborhood Services and the City of Springfield utilize HOME funding to foster and promote homeownership in the City by allocating funds for the rehabilitation of existing houses or new construction of single family houses to be marketed and sold to the first-time homebuyers. The individuals who are permitted

to buy these homes must be income eligible under the HOME program guidelines. The individuals who are permitted to buy these homes must maintain these homes as a primary residence for a period of between 5 and 15 years. The Office of Housing and Neighborhood Services requires that all deeds conveying HOME assisted houses contain a deed rider that outlines the specific 'resale/recapture' provisions of the HOME program and allows the buyer to be on notice of their responsibilities upon purchasing the HOME assisted properties. The Office of Housing and Neighborhood Services has further adopted affirmative marketing procedures and requirements for all rental and homebuyer projects assisted with HOME funds. The Office of Housing and Neighborhood Services requires the project developer i) to identify those least likely to apply for housing and ii) to develop an Affirmative Marketing Plan and to submit these two documents at the time of funding. The Affirmative Marketing Plan must incorporate the information regarding those persons least likely to apply for housing, as well as identify specific community organizations, places of worship, employment centers, fair housing groups, or housing counseling agencies where special outreach is and can be conducted. An approved project is monitored for compliance through project completion. Documentation is maintained for all marketing activities.

29) The First Time Homebuyer Financial Assistance Program uses American Dream Down-payment Initiative (ADDI) funds and HOME funds for an array of flexible financing to acquire a principal residence such as interest buydown, down payment, and closing cost assistance, and property rehabilitation. The goal of the program is to assist low-income renters to move into homeownership. Assistance provided by the City is in the form of a 0 percent loan. Where buyer does not sell or refinance the property, the buyer's obligation to pay is forgiven for the last five years from the date of the note. Families with incomes below 80 percent of the median income and who are first time homebuyers are eligible. The City's ADDI program requires that the home buyers i) participate in pre-purchase education to learn the responsibilities to accompany homeownership and ii) submit to affordability review to determine whether the homebuyer's income/debt can support the purchase. The City's goal is that 50 percent of the projected goal for homeownership will be minority. The Office of Housing and Neighborhood Services also inspects the property to ensure that repairs and maintenance will not burden the first-time home-buyers.

30) In furtherance of the goal of investing in residents and reducing poverty, the City has prioritized and dedicated federal, state, and local funding and resources to the education of and financial assistance to potential homebuyers. Lack of knowledge of the home buying process and savings for down payment and closing costs are substantial impediments to homeownership. Accordingly overcoming these barriers is a priority and will serve the goal of enabling low and moderate-income households to achieve housing stability while building equity. Specifically, the Office of Housing and Neighborhood Services has a homebuyer workshop education program (in English and Spanish) taught in four sessions. Session 1 provides a "guide to homeownership" which includes the provision of the following information: (i) cost of purchasing a home; (ii) monthly mortgage payments; (iii) pre-qualification guidelines; (iv) establishing, repairing, and obtaining credit record; (v) procedures for increasing powering power; (vi) mortgage

insurance alternatives; (vii) alternative methods for financing mortgages; (viii) managing debt and budgeting as new homeowner; (ix) financing major repairs and home improvements; and (x) early foreclosure intervention programs and credit counseling resources. Session 2 provides information about obtaining a mortgage, including (i) shopping for a loan; (ii) applying for a mortgage; (iii) the “four C’s of credit;” (iv) the processing of the loan; (v) property appraisal; and commitment letter. Session 2 also provides information about shopping for a home, working with a realtor, finding the right home, and negotiating the purchase. Session 3 provides information about home inspections, including what a home inspection should include, determining the quality of a home, environmental hazards, uses of inspection report, estimated costs for an inspection, and home maintenance and repairs. Session 4 provides information about the “closing,” including selecting a settlement agent, reviewing the purchase and sale agreement, the title search and title insurance, homeowner’s insurance, types of ownership, e.g., individual, joint tenants, the final “walk-through inspection,” closing costs, the note, the mortgage, the deed, and the declaration of homestead.

Availability of Affordable Housing; Home Buying Assistance, and Subsidized Housing

31) In addition, information about Springfield’s homebuyer assistance program is provided during these homebuying educational programs. The Office of Housing and Neighborhood Services provides information about eligibility criteria, property guidelines, and loan terms. Attendees of homebuying educational program are encouraged to complete appropriate forms and provide appropriate information to facilitate a determination of eligibility. Discussions on housing discrimination are being added to the program as appropriate staff and resources become available to the City. Over the past two years 18 home buyer-education programs have been conducted by the Office of Housing and Neighborhood Services or sponsored by a variety of civic and community organizations throughout the City. All adults are eligible to attend these education programs and these programs are provided without charge to the participants.

32) As compared to the surrounding communities of Holyoke, Northampton, Amherst, Chicopee, East Longmeadow, Longmeadow, Westfield, Wilbraham, and West Springfield, the City of Springfield has the second greatest proportion of housing units that qualify as “subsidized” by state definition – 17.4% -- and the fifth highest ratio in the State. Some of the credit for this record is The Springfield Housing Authority, which oversees a total of 2,387 public housing units and additional 2,675 units under contract through rental assistance programs. As many as 169 additional units, under contract through rental assistance programs, are currently under construction or under substantial rehabilitation. The Springfield Housing Authority is governed by a five-member Board. Four of the Board members are appointed by the Mayor and one by the Governor. The City, otherwise, has no role in Springfield Housing.

33) The City of Springfield has worked aggressively to preserve the privately owned subsidized rental housing that is at risk due to expiring use restrictions or expiring project based rental assistance contracts. The Office of Housing and Neighborhood Services has worked with several resident groups to facilitate the sale of subsidized housing projects to resident-controlled organizations. Three of Springfield’s largest subsidized family

housing projects have been purchased by resident owned corporations: Allen Park (263 units), Spring Meadow (232 units) and Cathedral Hill (48 units). The City provided financial assistance that leveraged substantial investment of other state and federal funds to make these tenant buy-outs possible. Similar plans are currently being implemented to preserve Liberty Hill Cooperative Housing (88 units) through a major redevelopment plan sponsored by the existing tenant cooperative. The City also supported and provided funding for resident purchase and infrastructure rehabilitation of the Boston Road Mobile Home Park (302 homes), which has been a critical housing resource for low and moderate income households in the community.

34) There has been no judicial determination of unlawful segregation or other housing discrimination pursuant to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The Secretary of HUD has not issued a charge under the Fair Housing Act regarding assisted housing in Springfield

35) The City of Springfield is and will be using significant public and private resources to address homeless needs and to prevent homelessness. Specifically, during 2006-2007, the City has proposed a number of activities and implemented a number of programs to assist homeless and special needs persons and families transition to permanent housing and independent living. Funds have been allocated for administration and program delivery costs related to a new singles emergency shelter. HOME funds have been allocated to provide Tax Base Revitalization Account (TBRA) subsidies for chronically homeless and special needs households, as well as to develop affordable housing for non-homeless special needs households

Other Support Services and Anti-Poverty Strategies

36) In addition, the Office of Housing and Neighborhood services and the City of Springfield prioritizes elderly and frail elderly, disabled (physically and developmentally) and persons and youths with HIV/AIDS for funds to provide housing and supportive services, including a fuel assistance program, Hungry Hill Senior Services, Pine Point Senior Services, Visually Impaired Elders, Teens for AIDS Prevention, Adult Basic Education, Loaves and Fishes, Elderly Case Management, and Therapeutic Recreation.

37) Recognizing that there are a high percentage of families living on or below the poverty level, the City of Springfield has an Anti-Poverty Strategy which recognizes the strong connection between literacy and education and the incidence of poverty. Without further education, many low-income parents, who have not finished high school, will not be able to compete for higher paying jobs.

38) The City is coordinating the efforts, skills, and services of a number of its departments in the Office of Community Development: Department of Housing and Neighborhood Services, Planning and Economic Development Department, and the Department of Health and Human Services to better meet the goal of reducing the number of poverty level families.

39) To address the issue of literacy the City is working very closely with organizations such as Holyoke, Chicopee, Head Start, Inc., which provides high quality comprehensive child development services to enrolled children and empowers families to achieve stability in their home environments. In addition, the Office of Housing and Neighborhood Services is working with the City's public schools in various initiatives that support the successful completion of K-12 by all students. Office of Housing and Neighborhood Services is further involved with the following initiatives: Step Up for Springfield, Cherish Every Child, Culture for Achievement, and Pupil Progression Plan

40) Office of Housing and Neighborhood Services is also developing partnerships with entities whose mission is to raise the educational and occupational skills levels of the workforce and improve economic self-sufficiency for low and moderate income families. Springfield's Adults Education Center is bridging the gap between education and meaningful employment with programs specifically geared to helping residents of Springfield to obtain a GED certificate, providing instruction and re-testing in both English and Spanish, and/or an Alternative High School Diploma Program. In addition, the Regional Employment Board (REB) coordinates the following programs and initiatives toward a goal of reducing poverty: i) Work Force Investment Act, which provides pre-employment, training, and job placement to more than 900 low-income youths and adults annually; ii) Pathways to Success by 21, which focuses on increasing the employment rate of youths, 16-24 years of age, by increasing the educational attainment levels and post-secondary education participation rates of drop-out youths 16-24 years of age and focusing particularly on Latino and African American youths, and iii) Education, Training, and Job Placement for Traditional Aid to Families with Dependent Children (TAFDC) Recipients, which is designed to serve more than 180 TAFDC recipients enter unsubsidized employment.

41) Office of Housing and Neighborhood Services also maintains strong partnerships with programs and organizations that are taking a lead in providing literacy and self-sufficiency programs such as those operating through the neighborhood councils, Puerto Rican Cultural Center, Urban League of Greater Springfield, Vietnamese American Civic Association, the Martin Luther King Center, and Springfield Technical Community College. In addition, the Hampden County Employment and Training Consortium (HCETC) and Massachusetts Career Development Institute (MCDI) are both involved in administering programs designed to provide job training and counseling to unemployed/underemployed persons, in addition to educational training.

42) Programs that strengthen the family's abilities to manage income, obtain, maintain, or improve housing arrangements; reduce and eliminate an emergency need; improve or maintain nutrition; obtain access to services; improve or maintain physical or behavioral health are of particular importance regarding the fight against poverty in Springfield. To that end, the Office of Housing and Neighborhood Services is supporting the work of Springfield Partners for Community Action regarding its work to assist city residents through programs to assist with weatherization, telephone reissuance, community food and nutrition, community health advocacy, volunteer income tax assistance, financial

literacy and awareness, individual development accounts, childcare, food distribution, and community market programs.

Action Program for 2004-2005

43) A neighborhood revitalization strategy was important in the yearly action program completed for the program year, 2004-2005, during which the City's CDBG funds were used to benefit low to moderate income persons. The majority of the funding was allocated for activities classified as economic development, housing and neighborhoods, public services, clearance and demolition, code enforcement, and public facilities

44) During 2004-2005, the Office of Housing and Neighborhood Services targeted HOME funds for five program areas: homebuyer assistance, existing homeowner rehabilitation, project based home ownership, multi-family rental housing, and tenant based rental assistance. The allocation permitted the City to commit resources to affordable housing.

45) During 2004-2005, the Office of Housing and Neighborhood Services prioritized rental subsidies with support services for HOPWA expenditures. HOPWA provided reports indicated that this priority resulted in increased stability for eligible households

46) During 2004-2005, the Office of Housing and Neighborhood Services used ESC funds for i) renovation work at Worthington Street Shelter; ii) essential services, including medical encounters, counseling nutrition and referrals; iii) funds for the operation of an emergency shelter for homeless singles and a teen living program to shelter teen parents; and iv) homeless prevention through a tenancy prevention program that provided case management, mediation and mental health intervention for at-risk households due to mental health issues and a legal assistance program to assist households facing evictions within the City of Springfield.

Private and State Organizations that Assist Springfield Citizens

47) The City and the Office of Housing and Neighborhood Services welcomes the assistance from both public and state agencies, commissions, and organizations, which provide more access and services, assistance, housing, and education to the City's citizens. The Office of Housing and Neighborhood Services and maintains a working relationship with all of them and fully supports and endorses their respective goals, programs, and initiatives,

48) The Massachusetts Fair Housing Center (MHFC) is a private non-profit fair housing enforcement organization with the goal of ensuring equal access to housing regardless of race, ethnicity, gender or other characteristics that have been the basis of illegal discrimination. The organization's mission is to promote fair housing practices, as a specific aspect of its broader goal of eliminating prejudice and discrimination in the housing market. The organization is further committed to (i) improving community relations; (ii) lessening neighborhood tensions and combating community deterioration; (iii) cooperating with other groups in attaining these objectives; and (iv) implementing

programs of research, education, and dissemination of information to its membership and to the public regarding issues related to discrimination and housing

49) The MHFC handles more than 200 discrimination complaints per year and conducts outreach to families at high risk of discrimination to increase awareness of fair housing laws and illegal housing practices. MHFC's staff visit local social service agencies to present workshops on fair housing rights; teach first-time home buyers about their rights; counsel homeowners about their mortgage obligations; and publish and distribute informative materials regarding discriminatory housing practices and the laws and alternatives available to redress unlawful practices and to protect homeowners. MHFC also trains housing providers regarding fair housing laws in an effort to prevent discrimination.

50) HAP, Inc., a housing partnership that has provided assistance to the people of Hampden and Hampshire Counties since 1973, and a wide range of services to tenants, homebuyers, homeowners, and rental property owners. Hap, Inc. supports the region's Housing Consumer Education Resource Center which includes a wide variety of written materials and computers that provide internet access to apartment listings and housing information, as well as counselors who are available to provide information concerning housing opportunities, housing related problems and questions, and information about rights and responsibilities.

51) Hap, Inc. was recently awarded a HUD Fair Housing Initiatives grant for a program to increase the understanding of fair housing rights among members of the protected classes, i.e., homeless families and individuals, recent immigrants, first-time homebuyers, and those with disabilities; housing providers; and providers of support services in Hampden and Hampshire Counties through a variety of outreach, education and counseling activities. Hap, Inc. is best known for its rental assistance programs that have assisted "thousands" of families and individuals over the past 30 years. See <http://www.haphousing.org>. The Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program and other programs allow families with very low incomes to be able to rent decent, safe housing at an affordable rent. The Residential Assistance to Families in Transition (RAFT) Program is designed to assist families who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. For more than 20 years, HAP, Inc. has operated Prospect House, an emergency shelter for homeless families. The Safe Step Programs provides transitional housing and supportive services to victims of domestic violence, as well as to pregnant and parenting teens.

52) HAP, Inc. also offers (i) first-time homebuyer education and assistance; (ii) lead-based paint hazard abatement programs that provides low-cost financing to owners of 1-4 family properties to remove lead-based paint hazards; (iii) home modification loan programs that provide deferred payment and low interest loans for physical modifications to the homes of elders and adults and children with disabilities; (iv) post-purchase homeownership and foreclosure prevention counseling, which includes workshops that cover such topics as investment protection, home maintenance, financing home reports or improvements, budgeting and managing credit, insurance, home safety, record keeping, and tax planning; (v) a program for homeowner options for Massachusetts elders who are

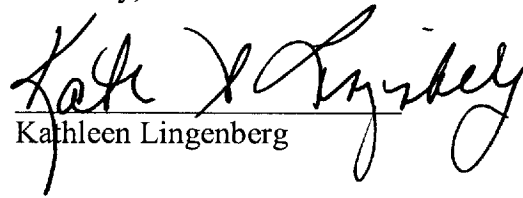
having trouble meeting housing and other living expenses; and (vi) property management training services.

53) Hap, Inc. has also been involved in the development of decent, affordable housing. Specifically, Hap, Inc. has participated in the development of 35 completed projects and a total of 830 units which include (i) elderly housing units; (ii) affordable rental units for families; (iii) single-person occupancy units; (iv) group homes for clients of the Department of Mental Retardation; and (v) rehabilitation or new construction of one and two-family homes for sale to low and moderate-income first time homebuyers

54) The Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD) enforces the Commonwealth's anti-discrimination laws relating to employment, housing, public accommodations, credit, mortgage lending, and education. M.G.L. c. 151B, §3. The MCAD enforces (i) M.G.L. c. 149, (ii) M.G.L. c. 105D, (iii) M.G.L. c. 151B, (iv) M.G.L. c. 151C, (v) M.G.L. c. 272, §92A and §9A, and (vi) M.G.L. c. 111, §199A. MCAD strives to eliminate discrimination and advance the civil rights of the people of the State through law enforcement and outreach. MCAD law enforcement includes filing complaints, investigations, mediations and conciliations, hearing, and litigation. MCAD outreach includes training sessions, public education, and testing programs. MCAD also reviews and advises the Governor's Cabinet Offices concerning the State's affirmative mandates in employment, housing, construction contracting, and minority and women business enterprises (Executive Order 452). Partnership with the United State Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission account for more than half of the Commission's operating budget and partnerships with municipal human rights commissions facilitate the provision of MCAD services to local communities across the State. The only non-Boston office of MCAD is located in Springfield

55) The Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) proposes activities and strategies that support a cohesive financial literacy and fair lending strategy for the region to address its findings that predatory lending and relining are problems in Springfield. The Commission conducted a study that determined that the loan approval rate for lenders based in the area was higher than for non-local lenders and that some local banks were doing active outreach to first-time homebuyers, offering good affordable mortgage products, and participating in efforts such as the Massachusetts Housing Partnership Soft Second Loan Program. PVPC further proposed and is supporting i) networking between lenders and nonprofits in order to better serve the low income communities; ii) the creation of Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) sites and banking services; iii) development of financial literacy programs; iv) the provision of educational opportunities for bankers and realtors, v) implementation of various marketing strategies.

Signed under the penalties of perjury this 29th day of January, 2007.


Kathleen Lingenberg